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Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2325

CURRENT RECORDS

August 13, 1987

USSR IMPORT ESTIMATES DOWN

The estimate of 1987/88 imports of grain by the USSR have been reduced by 5 million tons to 31 million, reflecting favorable growing conditions, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The revised estimate of USSR grain imports includes 19 million tons of wheat, 11 million coarse grains and 1 million miscellaneous grains, pulses and rice. So far this marketing year, purchases from all origins are estimated in the area of 6 to 7 million tons. The U.S. has been the major seller.

U.S. CORN EXPORTS

The United States 1986/87 export forecast for corn is up 1 million 300 thousand tons reflecting the shift of many importers to U.S. corn as a result of diminished exportable supplies in other exporting countries, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Demand for U.S. corn could be particularly strong in the first half of the 1987/88 year, as Thai and Argentine exportable supplies are unusually short. As of the end of July, outstanding sales for shipment over the next several months reached about 7 1/2 million tons, nearly 75 percent above last year's level.

WORLD COARSE GRAIN PRODUCTION

World production of coarse grain for 1987/88 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 810 million 600 thousand tons, down 3 percent from last year's crop. U.S. production is estimated at 220 million 400 thousand tons, up 3 1/2 million from last month, but down 13 percent from last year. USSR 111 1/2 million, up 5 percent from last year. European Community - 83 million 200 thousand tons, up 3 percent from last year. East Europe - 70 million 400 thousand tons, down 5 percent from last year. Canada - 23 million 800 thousand tons, down 9 percent from last year.

U.S. - USSR GRAIN TRADE

As of August 6, 1987, USSR purchases of grain during the fourth year of the U.S. - USSR Long Term Grain Agreement were still short of the required 9 million tons, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The USSR has purchased 4 million 100 thousand tons of wheat and 4 million 100 thousand tons of corn. The USSR has also purchased 46,000 tons of soybeans. As the USSR has already purchased the required minimum of wheat and corn, the balance of their purchases can be either wheat, corn or soybeans/soybean meal with each ton of soybean/soybean meal counting as 2 tons towards the agreement minimum.

USSR GRAIN CROP ESTIMATES UP

Due to continued favorable growing conditions, the 1987 Soviet grain crop is now estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 205 million tons, 10 million more than last month's estimate. It's still slightly less than last year's outturn of 210 million tons. The 10-million-ton increase in grain production this month includes 3 million tons of wheat, 6 million of coarse grains, and 1 million of miscellaneous grains and pulses.

WORLD WHEAT PRODUCTION

The world production of wheat for 1987/88 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 509 million 300 thousand tons, up 400 thousand or less than 1 percent from last month, but down 4 percent from last year's record harvest. U.S. production is estimated at 57 million 800 thousand tons, 2 percent above last year. Canada production is estimated at 24 million 800 thousand tons, down 22 percent from last year. India - 46 million tons, down 2 percent from last year. USSR 78 1/2 million tons, down 15 percent from last year.

WORLD OILSEEDS PRODUCTION

The world production for oilseeds for 1987/88 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at a record 202 million 700 thousand tons, up 3 percent from last year. U.S. production is estimated at 62 million 100 thousands tons, up 1 percent from last year. World production of soybeans is estimated at 102 million tons, up 2 percent from last year. U.S. production is estimated at 54 million 400 thousand tons, virtually same as last year.

U.S. CROP PRODUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

The following are the highlights of the U.S. crop production report of August 11, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. All wheat production is forecast at 2 billion 130 million bushels, up 2 percent from 1986. Corn for grain production is forecast at 7 billion 230 million bushels, down 12 percent from last year's crop. Soybean production is forecast at 2 billion bushels, fractionally below last year's production.

EC AND CANADA WHEAT

Canadian wheat exports in 1987/88 have been reduced 1 million tons to 21 million tons, which would be unchanged from a year ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The export estimate for the European Community has been reduced to 16 million tons. Canada and the EC as major suppliers of wheat to the USSR are now the chief exporters likely to be affected by the expected reduction in Soviet import demand.

**FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE**

WEATHER AND CROP UPDATE...The latest weather and crop update by USDA chief meteorologist Dr. Norton Strommen. Record corn yields predicted despite the heat, and the Southeast crop situation. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (256)

LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY UPDATE...Total red meat and poultry production is expected to increase two percent in 1988. USDA economist Ron Gustafson looks at factors contributing to increases in production. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (257)

THE TROPICAL FATS ISSUE...Imported tropical fats have contributed to the increase in fats and oil consumption. Dan Reuwee with the American Soybean Association discusses the situation that may be affecting both the farmer and consumer. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (258)

RURAL ROADS AND BRIDGES - THE PROBLEM...Ruth McWilliams with USDA's Office of Transportation describes principal reasons for bridge deficiencies in the U.S. and efforts being taken by the department to correct this problem. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (259)

RURAL ROADS AND BRIDGES - THE SOLUTION...Bill Penoyar with USDA's Forest Service talks about the contemporary timber bridge - its advances and ways it can be used to help alleviate the problem of rural roads and bridges in the U.S. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (260)

**FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE**

AGRICULTURE USA #1576...(Weekly 13 1/3 min documentary) The many virtues of plants we may think of only as weeds is the topic of this AGRICULTURE USA. Department of Agriculture herbalist Jim Duke is always looking for new plants that can be used for food, tea or even medicine.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1565...(Weekly news features) USDA news highlights; Late filing of acreage reports; Super pigs; Crop Production Update and Importing exotic animals.

CONSUMER TIME #1056...(Weekly 2 1/2 -3 min features) Health claims on food labels?; The water you drink; Meat and Poultry inspection marks; New fruit and vegetable preservatives; Blood cholesterol levels and heart disease.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Fri., Aug. 21, Feed outlook; Tues., Aug. 25, Weekly weather and crop outlook; Thurs., Aug. 27, East Asia outlook; World Tobacco Situation. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

OFF MIKE

Here are some items garnered from the NAFB Chats newsletter, in case you missed them. The Canadian Farm Writers Federation has honored George Atkins (Developing Countries Farm Radio Net, Oakville, Ontario, Canada) by establishing the George Atkins Professional Development Grant ... NAFB president Evan Slack (Evan Slack Net, Denver, CO) mentions seeing George in Toronto while on a tour in Canada ... Larry Steckline (Mid America Ag Net, Wichita, KS) was presented with an honorary degree by Pratt Community College ... The Intermountain Network, Salt Lake City, is no longer programming agricultural information. Mike Smith, who was the network's farm director, will continue in that capacity at KGHL, Billings, MT, and is setting up his own ag programming service ... A few columns back we mentioned a postcard our Florence Kelly received that contained a recipe for how to prepare rattlesnake meat. Dave Lane (Deputy Press Secretary, USDA) came up with one better, a column by Jimmy Breslin in the New York Daily News for how to cut down

Farm Broadcasters Letter
Radio and Television, Rm. 410-A
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U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

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on the pit bull population and other types of dogs and still feed the poor. We needn't go into detail, but no doubt you get the idea ... But on to headier things. Max Stewart (KXOK, St. Louis, MO) would like to see your newsletters. So, if you put one out on a regular (or irregular) basis, send him a sample...or better yet, put him on your mailing list. The station's address is 7777 Bonhomme. The zip code is 63105 ... Andy Mazzella dropped us a letter from KSAI. If you're not familiar with the call letters, we're not surprised. KSAI is on Saipan in the Marianas Islands. He used to work at WIHS in Connecticut. Main purpose of his letter was to request that we put him on our mailing list to receive our weekly tape programs. (A personal note: Andy's letter brought back memories, primarily ones formed while we were on the neighboring island of Guam at the end of WWII.)


JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief, Radio and Television Division